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Ravalli County Commissioners

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Ravalli County Commissioners & Darby District Ranger Oliver.

This letter is in regards to the proposed reopening of the Lost Horse quarry and the possible widening of Lost Horse Road. First, I want to say I oppose your plan.

Second, I want to give you a brief history of my family and how the Lehr's came to live in the Bitterroot Valley.

It was always my parents dream to move their family west from Pennsylvania. In 1972 my Mother passed away at the young age of 31 from breast cancer. I was eleven years old, my brothers 12 and 16. She never got to live her dream, but my Father, who was a union insulator, was determined to see it through. He traveled the country working in power plants and nuclear facilities. He hauled us boys around with him in a fifteen foot travel trailer for approximately three years living in KOA campgrounds. In 1976 we came through the Bitterroot Valley and my Father fell very much in love with it. Within two years he found his little piece of paradise on the Lost Horse. He bought a 16 x 24 cabin that was sitting on cinder blocks and a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot. When he wasn't busy traveling around working he was here spending time in the little cabin he loved. In 1986 at the age of 49 he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. His ashes are now spread over the $\frac{3}{4}$ acre on the Lost Horse that he loved so much and where I have called my home for the past 22 years. To some people $\frac{3}{4}$ acre doesn't seem like much, but to a child who spent many years living in a fifteen foot travel trailer in KOA's, it is something solid that I treasure and I pray that it will always remain in my family. I am living the dream my parents wanted for their family. Two of my wife's Great-Great Grandfathers settled in the Darby area in the late 1800's. Most people recognize the Matteson and Hart name. They also had a dream for their families when moving to the valley way back then, many of them lost now with the population growth and changes brought with it.

The county tells me they have no plans to widen Lost Horse Road. I do not believe this for a second. I stand to lose a quarter of my property if this goes through, the same sacred ground that my Father's ashes are spread over. Your signs tell me that I am not allowed to run a chainsaw, ride my motorbike, or pick up rocks in the Lost Horse quarry area, but yet you plan to put a huge crusher and other large machinery there that will create noise, pollution, and leave an unsightly scar in our beautiful canyon besides create a hazard on our road with your big trucks. To keep things safe and enjoyable for everyone who lives and recreates on the Lost Horse the proposed reopening of the quarry cannot happen. Instead you need to lower the speed limit on Lost Horse Road, fill in the potholes, and allow the people of this valley to enjoy the beauty this area has to offer. I am not the only person living their dream in this valley. I pray you do not turn it into a nightmare.

Doug "Woody" Lehr
367 Lost Horse Road